(c) what is the amount allocated for the purpose during the current Five Year Plan period; and

(d) to what extent the amount allocated in this Plan is less than that of allocated in the last Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI GIRIDHAR GAMANG) (a) There is no proposal from Government of Gujarat for increased Plan allocation for village and small industries (VSI) sector of which Small Scale Industries is one of the sub-sectors.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Eighth Plan outlay for VSI sector in Gujarat is Rs. 435 crores.

(d) The Eighth Plan outlay is more than three times the Seventh Plan outlay of Rs. 130.23 crores.

Increase in Prices of Edible salt

1870. SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been steep increase in the prices of edible salt in Delhi in the recent past;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for the abnormal increase in the sale prices of salt; and

(c) what steps have been taken by Government to contain the prices?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) A statement showing the Retail Prices of edible iodised salt from August, 1994 to August, 1995 at Delhi is enclosed (*see* below).

(b) and (c) There is no control of Govt. on the price, procurement and distribution of salt. The prices of salt vary as per market condition, increase in cost of production and transportation, etc. However, a watch is being maintained on the trend in prices of salt by Govt. of NCT of Delhi.

Statement

Retail Prices of Edible Iodised salt in Delhi From August, 1994 to August, 1995.

Month	(Rs. Per kg.) Prices
August, 94	4.00
September,94	4.00
October, 94	4.00
November, 94	4.00
December, 94	4.00
January, 95	4.00
February, 95	4.00
March, 95	4.00
April, 95	4.00
May, 95	4.50
June, 95	4.50
July, 95	4.50
August, 95	4.50

Source: Delhi Administration.

Coal reserves in Madhya Pradesh

1871. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to refer to answers to Starred Question 14 and Unstarred Question 91 given in the Rajya Sabha on 31st July, 1995 and state the total present estimated reserves of coal in Madhya Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): As per assessment made by the Geological Survey of India (GSI), the estimated reserves of coal in Madhya Predesh as on 1-1-1995 (down to a depth of 1200 metres) are 40766.69 million tonnes.

Strike by Indian Workers in Kuwait

1872. SHRI K.M. KHAN: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of certain recent reports indicating that 600 Indian workers working for a Korean firm in Kuwait went on a strike;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have called for a detailed report from Indian Embassy in Kuwait;

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether Government propose to take some action in the matter in the interest of Indian Construction workers in Kuwait; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI P.A. SANGMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Indian workers employed in Hyundai Construction Company, a Korean firm in Kuwait, went on a strike after one of their colleagues was hit by a Korean Safety Supervisor when the Indian worker reportedly tried to get some water from the main supply tank after break-down of water supplies to the labour camp.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) When Indian Embassy at Kuwait came to know about the incident it immediately contact the management of Company, the Indian workers including the affected Indian worker, Shri Nisar Ahmed who was in the hospital, Regular liasion with hospital authorities was kept to ensure that proper medical attention was extended to him. A police case has also been registered against the concerned Korean Safety Supervisor, which is under investigation by the area administration. The Korean employee is on bail. Indian Embassy is pursuing the matter with the police authorities. The company has also expressed their deep regrets in writing for this unfortunate incident. The Indian Embassy is following up the case to ensure that the safety and dignity of the Indian workers is maintained.

(e) and (f) The Indian Embassy in Kuwait has already taken up the matter with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Kuwait.

India's share in export of Agricultural Products

1873. SHRI BHUPINDER SINGH MANN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) India's share in World export trade in agricultural products;

(b) whether the total volume of farm exports is still very low; if so, the details of items exported; and

(c) the steps to boost farm exports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) The world trade in agricultural commodities is estimated to be about US$300 billion. During 1994-95 exports of agricultural commodities (excluding tea, cofee, raw cotton and marine products) were valued at Rs. 7049.04 crores (US$ 2247 million). The agricultural commodities exported include Basmati and Non-basmati rice, tobacco, spices, cashew, oilmeals, Guar Gum and fruits and vegetables. The details of the agricultural commodities exported are given in the Foreign Trade Statistics published by the DGCI&S, Calcutta, copies of which are available in the Parliament Library.

(c) Steps taken to enhance export of agricultural products include simplification of inspection procedures, removal of Minimum Export Price and quantity restrictions on selected items, provisions of concessional credit, product development to meet international needs, extension of benefits available under the scheme of EOUs/EPZs to agriculture sector and permitting 50% sale in the domestic tariff area, assistance to exporters for improved packaging, strengthening of quality control, promoting export of identified products through brand promotion campaigns, arranging buyer-seller meets and participation in international fairs/exhibitions.

अखबारी कागज की आयात संबंधी नीति

1874. **श्री मोहम्मद अफजल उर्फ मीम अफजल:** क्या वाणिज्य मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि वर्ष 1995-96 में अखबारी कागज के आयात के लिये अभी तक कोई आयात नीति घोषित नहीं की गई है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो इस विलम्ब के क्या कारण हैं;

(ग) क्या सरकार ने अखबारी कागज के आयात के लिये कोई नीति तैयार की है, यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है; और